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ANNUAL REPORT

of the

STANDING COMMITTEE

on

COMMUNITY SERVICES

2001 - 2002

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

STANDING COMMITTEE

on

COMMUNITY SERVICES

2001 - 2002

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

103-04474/

Hon. Murray Scott
Speaker
House of Assembly
Province House
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Dear Mr. Speaker,

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Community Services, I am pleased to submit the Annual Report of the Committee for the First Session, Second Sitting and the Second Session, First and Second Sittings of the Fifty-Eight General Assembly.

Respectfully Submitted

Mary Ann McGrath, MLA
(Halifax-Bedford Basin)
Chairman
Standing Committee on Community Services

Halifax, Nova Scotia
May 2003

Printed on paper that contains recycled fibre

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INTRODUCTION

The Standing Committee on Community Services, an all-party Committee of the House of Assembly, was struck at the beginning of the First Session of the Fifty-Eighth General Assembly. Pursuant to Rule 60(2)(d) of the ***Province of Nova Scotia Rules and Forms of Procedures of the House of Assembly:***

> **(d)** the Community Services Committee is established for the purpose of considering matters normally assigned to or within the purview of the Departments and Ministers of Business and Consumer Services and of Municipal Affairs and matters relating to the Human Rights Commission and the Nova Scotia Sport and Recreation Commission[1]

In 1998, the Speaker, as Chairman of the Legislature's Internal Economy Board, gave the Community Services Committee written permission to also consider matters within the purview of the Department of Health and the Department of Community Services.[2]

During the session the Committee underwent a number of membership changes. The membership of the Community Services Committee currently is as follows:

Mrs. Mary Ann McGrath, MLA - Chairman
Halifax Bedford Basin

Ms. Maureen MacDonald, MLA - Vice Chairman
Halifax Needham

Mr. Cecil O'Donnell, MLA
Shelburne

Mr. John Chataway, MLA
Chester

Mrs. Muriel Baillie, MLA
Pictou West

Mr. David Hendsbee, MLA
Preston

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[1] **Province of Nova Scotia Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly, July 1999, Rule 60(2)(d) Pages 61.**

[2] **Nova Scotia, Letter from the Speaker to the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Community Services, August 27, 1998.**

Mr. Jerry Pye, MLA
Dartmouth North

Mr. Paul MacEwan, MLA
Cape Breton Nova

Mr. Dave Wilson, MLA
Cape Breton East

During the session the committee underwent a membership change. The change was as follows:

Mrs. Muriel Baillie, MLA was replaced by

Mr. Barry Barnet, MLA
Sackville - Beaverbank

Mr. Dave Wilson, MLA was replaced by;

Mr. Wayne Gaudet, MLA
Clare

PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS

The Community Services Committee traditionally meets once a month. These meetings are held on the last Thursday of the month in the Legislative Committees Office. During the Third Sitting in the First Session of the Fifty-Eighth General Assembly the Committee met on the following dates:

November 8, 2001
November 29, 2001
January 24, 2002
March 21, 2002
May 23, 2002
June 6, 2002
September 26, 2002

NOTICES

Notices of the Committee meetings are sent to all members of the Committee, staff of the caucus offices, the Legislative staff and the House of Assembly Press Gallery. The notices are also posted in Province House and are on the Committees' web-site at the following address:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/COMMITTEES/services.html

VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts of all Community Services Committee meetings are available from the Legislative Library in Province House, the Legislative Committees Office or on-line at the Community Services Committee's web page at the following address:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/COMMITTEES/services.html

RESEARCH MATERIAL

All research for the Community Services Committee is compiled by the Committee's Clerk, and distributed to the members. Reference material is placed in binders and distributed prior to meetings. A copy of this material is also made available to the witnesses appearing before the Committee and Hansard Recording Services.

ANNUAL REPORTS

All reports from the Community Services Committee are compiled and written by the Committee's Clerk. Once the Chairman has approved the initial draft, it is then sent to the individual Committee members for consideration. The draft review complete, the report is tabled with the Clerk of the House.

Distribution of the report is as follows: to the Speaker, all members of the Legislature, all witnesses that appeared before the Committee, the Legislative Library in Nova Scotia and in all other provinces and territories, Deputy Ministers, Chairpersons of all Canadian Community Services Committees, and the Media. This report is also available to the general public upon request through the Legislative Committees Office or on-line at the Committee's web page at the following address:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/COMMITTEES/services.html

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Committee wishes to extend its gratitude to witnesses for their time and cooperation; Ms. Mora Stevens, Clerk of the Community Services Committee and the staff of the Legislative Committees Office for the organization and research of committee meetings. Others whose assistance has been invaluable to the Committee are: Mr. Robert Kinsman, Editor of Hansard, and Hansard staff; Mr. Don Ledger, Coordinator Legislative Television and Broadcast Services, and staff; Ms. Margaret Murphy, Legislative Librarian, and staff.

WITNESSES

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2001 *NOVA SCOTIA / NATIONAL CHILD TAX BENEFIT*

Department of Community Services
Ms. Tracey Williams, Executive Director, Income Assistance and Employment Support Services

Communications Nova Scotia
Mr. Steve Bone, Communications Advisor

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2001 *NOVA SCOTIA TOBACCO STRATEGY / TEEN SMOKING*

Department of Health
Ms. Nancy Hoddinott, Coordinator - Tobacco Strategy
Ms. Janet Braunstein Moody, Senior Director Population Health

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2002 *SENIOR CITIZENS' SECRETARIAT*

Senior Citizens' Secretariat
Ms. Valerie White, Executive Director
Ms. Heather Praught, Coordinator
Mr. Steven Coyle, Policy Analyst/Researcher

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2002 *MADD CANADA (DIGBY CHAPTER) / RCMP ADVISOR*

MADD Canada (Digby Chapter) / RCMP Advisor
Mrs. Helena Winchester, Acting President
Mrs. Elizabeth Fox, Board Member
Cst. Christian Thibaudeau, RCMP Advisor to MADD/ Board Member
Mr. Richard Fox, Board Member
Ms. Kimberly Drew, Board Member
Mr. Roger Winchester, Board Member
Ms. Susan MacAskill, Assistant Chapter Services Manager Atlantic Region

WITNESSES

THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2002 — *"PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH"*

Sport and Recreation Commission
Mr. Tony Martin, Deputy Head and Chief Executive Officer
Mr. Mike Arthur, Director of Community Development

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2002 — *PHOENIX YOUTH PROGRAM*

Phoenix Youth Progress Centre
Mr. Tim Crooks, Executive Director
Ms. Patti Melanson, Health Services Coordinator
Mr. Steven Mabey, Treasurer - Board of Directors

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2002 — *SETTING THE FALL/WINTER AGENDA*

PUBLIC HEARINGS

NOVA SCOTIA *I* NATIONAL CHILD TAX BENEFIT

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2001

WITNESSES

Department of Community Services
Ms. Tracey Williams, Executive Director, Income Assistance and Employment Support Services

Communications Nova Scotia
Mr. Steve Bone, Communications Advisor

BACKGROUND

In 1998, federal, provincial and territorial governments launched the National Child Benefit(NCB) program. This program marked a basic shift of income support for children from provincial or territorial social assistance to a delivery system that promotes a consistent, non-intrusive manner. The NCB is the Government of Canada's primary means of helping families with the cost of raising children. This program is made up of two parts: the basic Child Tax Benefit (CTB), and the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS). These benefits are calculated by Revenue Canada through the income tax program. In Nova Scotia the program has three major objectives:

1. Help prevent and reduce the depth of child poverty

2. Promote attachment to the workforce. The goal is to have fewer families rely on social assistance and helping them into the employment system In Nova Scotia, this has been attempted by introducing a new Bill in the House of Assembly, the Employment Support and Income Assistance Act.

3. Reduce the duplication and overlap within the system that provides children's programs. In order to do this Nova Scotia has tried to standardize the approach made both provincially and federally.

In Nova Scotia, there is a standard annual benefit of $1700 per child, for families who have a net income less than $16,000 per year. In Nova Scotia the provincial and federal governments work together. Almost 60,000 children in low-income families will receive the Nova Scotia Child Benefit.

Nova Scotia Child Benefit
Maximum Benefits to Family Net Income of $15,999 Effective July 2001

	July 2001 Annual Benefit	July 2001 Monthly Benefit
1st Child	$ 445.00	$ 37.08
2nd Child	$ 645.00	$ 53.75
3rd Child	$ 720.00	$ 60.00

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

There were a number of matters discussed with the witnesses during the meeting. Outlined below are the topics that the Committee focused on during the meeting:

- Determination of eligibility, guaranteed income levels, cost of living increases, re-profiling of assistance payments, reinvestment strategy;
- Employment Support and Income Assistance Act, eligibility criteria, standardized benefits, re-profiling;
- Grandparents program, availability of family support systems;
- NCB System contributions, measurement formulas, evaluation and assessment programs, criteria used in the evaluation process;
- Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland models;
- Healthy Child Initiative Program, early intervention, dedicated daycare seats; and
- Department of Health, Pharmacare program, availability of diabetic supplies.

DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED

The committee requested the following documents from the witnesses:

- A copy of the monthly assessment formulas used by the federal government in respect to the allocation of funds and grants.

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found online at the following address:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs011108.htm

NOVA SCOTIA TOBACCO STRATEGY / TEEN SMOKING

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2001

WITNESSES

Department of Health
Ms. Nancy Hoddinott, Coordinator - Tobacco Strategy
Ms. Janet Braunstein Moody, Senior Director - Population Health

BACKGROUND

Nova Scotia has the highest smoking rate in Canada, Tobacco use remains the number one cause of preventable death and disability in Nova Scotia.

Facts
- Nova Scotia's smoking rate is currently at 30%;
- Youth smoking rate for the population aged 15-19 is 25%;
- Women smoking during pregnancy rate is currently at 25%;
- The high rates of smoking in Nova Scotia translate into high rates of chronic disease;
- Tobacco use remains Nova Scotia's number one cause of preventable illness and death;
- 1,650 Nova Scotians die each year due to smoking related illnesses;
- 200 Nova Scotians die every year from exposure to environmental or second hand smoke; and
- The estimated costs to treat smoking related illness is $170 million, which is substantially more than the revenue generated through tobacco taxes.

Comprehensive Tobacco Strategy
Throughout 2000-2001, the Department of Health coordinated stakeholder consultations and conducted research and best practices reviews to identify elements that would need to be contained in a Comprehensive Tobacco Strategy for Nova Scotia. Once this was completed the Department of Health developed a provincial tobacco strategy built around the following initiatives: comprehensiveness, adequate funding, long term commitment and collaboration.

A multi-year approach in the areas of pricing and taxation, smoke-free legislation, policy treatment, cessation programs, community-based programming, youth smoking prevention, media and public awareness, monitoring and evaluation is planned.

The goal of Nova Scotia's Comprehensive Tobacco Strategy is to reduce disease, disability and death caused by tobacco use by preventing youth initiation of tobacco use, supporting cessation among youth and adults and eliminating exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke. The Department of Health

has specifically targeted their efforts toward the youth of Nova Scotia. In addition to the overall efforts of the Provincial Tobacco Strategy, the Department is focusing their attention on specific youth initiatives such as:

- Supporting the Provincial Youth Tobacco Advisory Committee;
- Developing a school smoking prevention program consisting of smoking prevention curriculum;
- Developing guidelines for effective school tobacco policies;
- Youth cessation program support;
- Developing a youth web-site in conjunction with the overall government web-site on Tobacco Control;
- Continuing the enforcement program concerning the ban on sale of tobacco to minors under the Nova Scotia Tobacco Access Act; and
- Developing a public education and awareness campaign to educate the public about the law and to increase compliance.

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

There were a number of matters discussed with the witnesses during the meeting. Outlined below are the topics that the Committee focused on during the meeting:

— Development of the Tobacco Strategy, education and monitoring programs, treatment and cessation programs, statistics on smoking in Nova Scotia versus the rest of Canada;
— Inspection process concerning selling to minors, independent food source retailers;
— Legal action against tobacco companies;
— Smoke-free legislation, hospitality industry concerns;
— Costs to the public healthcare system;
— Influences on youth, peer pressure, influence of Hollywood, commercials, parenting models;
— Taxes on cigarettes, cross border smuggling of cigarettes;
— Tobacco versus marijuana versus alcohol; and
— Administrative and actual costs of the program.

DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED

The committee requested the following documents from the witnesses:

— A copy of the Student Drug Use 1998- Technical Report; and
— The working paper entitled Predictors of Canadian Legislators Support for Tobacco Control Policies.

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found online at the following address:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs011129.htm

SENIOR CITIZENS' SECRETARIAT

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2002

WITNESSES

Senior Citizens' Secretariat
Ms. Valerie White, Executive Director
Ms. Heather Praught, Coordinator
Mr. Steven Coyle, Policy Analyst/Researcher

BACKGROUND

The Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat is a Committee of Cabinet Ministers consisting of the Ministers of Health, Community Services, Education, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations and the Minister responsible for the Sport and Recreation Commission. The Ministers who comprise the Secretariat head Departments with program responsibilities in the field of aging. The Secretariat is served by a small staff that provides leadership in the aging policy field by working with Departments to develop priorities and introduce new programs.

The Secretariat provides a one door entry to the government on behalf of seniors and their families. The Secretariat is also the policy and planning arm of government which works with other provincial government department to plan programs and services seniors.

Every year, the Secretariat holds consultations with seniors organizations, councils, centres and special interest groups throughout the Province. In addition, the staff meet monthly with representatives from the Department of Health - Group of IX to discuss relevant issues and to assist them in making recommendations to the Minister of Health on Pharmacare and Single Entry Access matters.

The Secretariat has recently initiated several new committees to enable seniors to be involved with the policies and planning around issues such as elder abuse, medication awareness, safe driving, Seniors and Literacy and the 50+ Expo Management Committee. The 50+ Expo Committee is also involved in a research project called Aging Well in Rural Places.

The Secretariat has also developed fact sheets on emerging seniors' issues such as insurance cost. The fact sheets focus on the issues of concern emerging from the community that require immediate attention or action.

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

There were a number of matters discussed with the witnesses during the meeting. Outlined below are the topics that the Committee focused on during the meeting:

— 50+ Expo (formerly the Seniors Expo), Seniors Program Guide and Newsletter, communication of information amongst the senior population, culture within the seniors' community, wealth of knowledge;
— Insurance rates for seniors', fact sheet on insurance rates;
— Quality and quantity of seniors housing, tax rebates and rental assistance programs, Financial Aid Act, Guaranteed Income Supplement, Partners Against Consumers Tele Fraud (PACTF);
— Urban versus rural problems among seniors, transportation issues, adult protection; and
— Single Entry Access, Pharmacare Program, over prescribing of medications to seniors', drug dependency, Sport and Recreation - Seniors Wellness Program.

DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED

The Committee did not request that the witness provide further documentation.

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found online at the following address:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs020124.htm

MOTHERS AGAINST DRUNK DRIVING (MADD) CANADA DIGBY CHAPTER / RCMP ADVISOR

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2002

WITNESSES

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Canada - Digby Chapter / RCMP Advisor
Mrs. Helena Winchester, Acting President
Mrs. Elizabeth Fox, Board Member
Cst. Christian Thibaudeau, RCMP Advisor to MADD/Board Member
Mr. Richard Fox, Board Member
Ms. Kimberly Drew, Board Member
Mr. Roger Winchester, Board Member
Ms. Susan MacAskill, Assistant Chapter Services Manager - Atlantic Region

BACKGROUND

Mothers Against Drunk Driving Canada (MADD) is a registered charitable organization. MADD is a nonprofit, grassroots organization with chapters throughout the country. MADD Chapters are run by volunteers and include not only mothers, but fathers, friends, business professionals, experts in the drunk driving field and concerned citizens who want to make a difference in the fight against impaired driving.

MADD aims to heighten awareness about the dangers of impaired driving and offer support services to the victims, and to save lives. The organization is composed of 44 Chapters across Canada. The Digby Chapter is just one of those Chapters.

The Digby County Chapter was chartered by Roger and Helena Winchester in 1997. Since 1997, the Digby Chapter has created and organized a community action group that promotes the mission of MADD Canada at the local level. The Digby Chapter is now participating in several major community events throughout the year. Numerous lectures are given by the volunteers to young drivers at local driving schools. These lectures are effective among young drivers and are presented in such a way that students become actively involved in the activities and the exchange of information.

The Digby Chapter also formed a partnership with the Class of 2000 of the Digby Regional High Schools to created the First Annual Operation Prom Night.

Operation Prom Night
This event took place over a seven-day period in the Spring of 2000. It required the participation of numerous students. The program provided check-in point activities, preventative lectures among peers and the opportunity to share information with adult participants. A full scale mock accident involving graduating students, RCMP, local fire departments, ambulance departments and other volunteers also took place.

A very close relationship has developed between the Class of 2000 and the Members of the Digby MADD Chapter. Operation Prom Last night has continued to be a great success in Digby County and MADD Canada Chapters throughout Nova Scotia and the entire country has shown interest in this project.

Visitation Program
The visitation program is an activity or presentation provided by the Digby Chapter of MADD to a group of people with the objective of educating the participants against drinking and driving and to impact the awareness of the tragic consequences of impaired driving. This program is designed to be versatile and to fit various audiences of all age groups and backgrounds. Multimedia and interactive presentations are used because of their effectiveness on the majority of participants in the program.

RCMP Statistics
- In Canada, there is one death due to drunk driving every six hours;
- Canada wide in 1995, there were 1,529 people killed due to alcohol related crashes.
- Alcohol is involved in approximately 42% of all motor vehicle fatalities;
- Alcohol is involved in 73% of all snowmobile and all terrain vehicle crashes;
- Persons between the ages of 16-24 years old are at the highest percentage of people involved in fatal vehicle crashes (Alcohol and non-alcohol related);
- Among those who drink and operate a motor vehicle 25% admit to drinking and driving after drinking; 65% said that they have done so in the past month; and
- Roadside surveys taken at night on weekends indicate that 12% of drivers have been drinking; of those surveyed, 75% had levels less than 0.08 and 7% had levels above 0.15.

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

There were a number of matters discussed with the witnesses during the meeting. Outlined below are the topics that the Committee focused on during the meeting:

— Visitation program, cooperation with local school boards, Operation Prom Night;
— Impairment levels, zero tolerance policy, law enforcement;
— Seat belt legislation, sign laws, white cross program, cost to the healthcare system due to impaired driving, compensation for victims, rising insurance rates;

— Vehicle Ignition Inter-lock program, user pay; and
— Funding, private sector donations, telemarketing, access to the Nova Scotia Liquor Commission Store fund raising.

DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED

The Committee did not request that the witness provide further documentation.

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found
online at the following address:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2002mar21.htm

"PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH"

THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2002

WITNESSES

Sport and Recreation Commission

Mr. Tony Martin, Deputy Head and Chief Executive Officer
Mr. Mike Arthur, Director of Community Development

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Sport and Recreation Commission (SRC) is to enhance the quality of life of Nova Scotians through the development, encouragement, establishment, coordination, implementation and promotion of sport and recreational programs and services. The system is primarily run by volunteers. There are 80 provincial organizations throughout the province with six regional offices.

The SRC have outlined the following goals:

Participation
Increase participation in structured and unstructured opportunities for sport, recreation, fitness and play

Facilities
Increase availability and sustainability of physical infrastructure for sport and recreation

Leadership
Increase the availability and sustainability of individual leaders in sport and recreation.

Community Capacity
Increase commitment and ability of communities and organizations to provide sport and recreation opportunities.

There is a growing national and international interest in disease prevention. Researchers have determined that there is a recognized link between physical activity and health. Currently, 250,000 Nova Scotians regularly take part in various sporting activities. In the Fall of 2000 a study was completed in Nova Scotia that measured the level of physical inactivity in children. From that study the SRC developed a new initiative

Physically Active Children and Youth Strategy / Active Kids, Healthy Kids
An interdepartmental Committee known as the Physically Active Children and Youth Committee was formed to develop a strategy responsible for coordinated the provincial effort to increase the number of children and youth that are active enough for health benefits by 10 per cent by the year 2003.

Research clearly shows that participation in physical activity and recreation helps promote long-term health benefits, prevents crime, develops youth leadership skills, enhances student academic performances and strengthens personal development. There are disturbing trends toward the number of children and youth who are physically inactive and leading sedimentary lifestyles. There are an increasing number of overweight and obese children in Nova Scotia and diagnosis of type two diabetes is on the increase. The SRC in Nova Scotia has developed the Active Kids Healthy Kids program in order to combat some of these problems.

The objectives of the program are as follows:

- Identify the percentage of children and youth in Nova Scotia who regularly meet the daily standard of 60 minutes of accumulated moderate physical activity in a 24-hour period;
- Accurately track changes in physical activity levels in Nova Scotia children and youth over a several year period;
- Organize the development and implementation of physical activity, recreation or sport opportunities for children and youth;
- Increase the knowledge of academics, professionals, volunteers and the general public regarding the level of physical activity of children and youth in Nova Scotia;
- Identify factors impacting on activity levels; and
- Develop an infrastructure (ie equipment and leadership) to conduct separately funded research and interventions on special populations such as children with asthma, those at risk for diabetes, children with disabilities and children of Aboriginal communities.

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

There were a number of matters discussed with the witnesses during the meeting. Outlined below are the topics that the Committee focused on during the meeting:

— Active Kids, Health Kids program, available resources for the program;
— Facility development program, community involvement in planning recreational facilities;
— Physical education programs in schools, access to schools after hours for community groups, P3 schools;
— Economic factors behind inactivity rates, fees for sport, lower income families and the cost of sporting activities;
— Girls in sport - targeted separately;

— 1976 Olympic Games Lottery Funding, disabled sports funding programs, wheelchair access to facilities, taxing junk food (Fat Tax), Health Canada, income tax exemptions for sport and recreational activities;
— Participaction television advertisement campaign;
— Abandon railway lines for trails, availability of soccer fields and hockey arenas for teams, community outdoor rinks; and
— Mulgrave Park playground facility, Ecology Action Centre program.

DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED

The Committee did not request that the witness provide further documentation.

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found
online at the following address:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2002may23.htm

PHOENIX YOUTH PROGRAMS

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2002

WITNESSES

Phoenix Youth Progress Centre
Mr. Tim Crooks, Executive Director
Ms. Patti Melanson, Health Services Coordinator
Mr. Steven Mabey, Treasurer - Board of Directors

BACKGROUND

The Phoenix Youth Program was founded in 1984. Phoenix Youth Programs recognizes the value of all youth and strives for a world where youth live with dignity, free from oppression, in a safe environment. Phoenix Youth Programs support at risk and homeless youth within the extended community. The program is geared to break the cycle of homelessness by offering a wide range of programs and services. The program strives to be a meaningful presence and a voice for social injustice in the lives of the youth that it serves.

A primary innovative feature of the Program is that through the diversity of programs and services available there is a continuum of care provided. This care includes crisis intervention, long term support and structured living environments, academic and pre-employment training and aftercare services. Phoenix Youth Programs works to provide the necessary interventions and assistance to address the individual needs of at-risk and homeless youth. The Program recognizes that a successful and lasting transition from despair to hope is one that takes time and necessitates the application of comprehensive, creative and flexible support.

Since its inception in 1984, the Phoenix Youth Programs has received significant and lasting community support. The Program had been recognized for innovative and creative service delivery. This has allowed the program to successfully raise funds to support their work. In 2002-2003 the fund-raising goals have been set for $355,000. The Program is also hoping to receive $250,000 In-Kind donations. The Program receives a wide range of support from community groups, service clubs, faith groups, foundations, corporations, schools and private individuals. The program has 184 volunteers.

The following is a brief outline of the individual programs offered by Phoenix Youth Programs:

Phoenix Centre for Youth
Phoenix Centre for Youth is a street front walk-in service offering counseling, referral to community resources, health care, showers, laundry facilities, food and advocacy. In 2000-2001 there were167 new clients in the centre. The total number of clients and follow-up contacts since the Centre opened is 7433. 57% of their clients are male, 43% female

Phoenix Youth Shelter
Phoenix Youth Shelter is a 20-bed facility offering a range of services including emergency accommodations, health care, clothing, food, counseling and therapeutic support to enable youth to move forward to a safer, healthier and more fulfilling life. The average occupancy of the facility is 92%. It has served 83 clients since it has been open, 61 males, 22 females.

Health Services
Phoenix Youth Programs offers on-site health care at the Phoenix Youth Shelter, Phoenix Centre for Youth and Phoenix House. Services include health assessment, immunizations, care for some illness and injury, mental health support and coordination, sexually transmitted disease testing, referral to physicians and acquisition of Nova Scotia Health Cards. Health Services has been utilized by 171 people in 2001-2001 alone, 64% males, 36% females. 60% of those helped have had mental health related needs, 40% have needed physical health related needs.

Phoenix House
Phoenix House is the most widely recognized program that Phoenix Youth Programs is involved in. Phoenix House opened its doors in 1997. It is a 10-bed residential facility for both males and females. It offers safe, supportive housing for youth learning skills for independent living. In 2001-2002 there were 26 admissions, 14 males, 12 females. The average age of the residents is 17.8 years.

Supervised Apartment Program
The Supervised Apartment Program is comprised of three homes in which clients reside with a live-in support person hired by Phoenix Youth Programs. The location so these homes are within close walking distance to Phoenix House. The Supervised Apartment Program provides a close to normal supportive living situation for youth learning skills needed for the next level of independent living. In 2001-2002 there were 25 referrals to the program, but only seven admissions. The average age of the resident is 19 years old and the average length of stay is 10 months.

Phoenix Learning and Employment Centre
The Phoenix Learning and Employment Centre provides youth with opportunity for pre-employment, life skills and academic development. This initiative is funded by the federal government. In 2001-2002 there were 311 clients, 56 % male, 44% female. 77% of the clients were between the ages of 16-19 years old.

Follow-up Program
The Follow-up Program provides for an ongoing continuity of support and crisis intervention. Recognizing that meaningful change takes time, this program is specifically designed to remain with an individual for the "long-haul." More than 2100 clients have been assisted by this program. There are currently 359 clients using the follow-up service. This program holds reunions and at the last reunion more than 100 people attended who had participated in Phoenix Youth Programs.

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

There were a number of matters discussed with the witnesses during the meeting. Outlined below are the topics that the Committee focused on during the meeting:

- Children and Family Services Act, legislation gap in the Child Welfare Act;
- Federal funding for the Phoenix Learning and Employment Centre, Human Resources Development Canada funding, National Youth In-Care Program;
- Fund-raising, municipal, provincial and federal funding opportunities, corporate donations, support of volunteers;
- Homeless youth, income levels, long term housing needs for homeless youth;
- Specialized arts and cultural programs for youth, art gallery exhibitions for youth;
- Health care access, physicians donating services, wait lists for services for youth, medications;
- Smoke-free legislation, smoking rates among youth; and
- Educational program, out reach to community groups, speaking engagements in high schools, referrals to the program by guidance counselors, parenting support programs.

DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED

The Committee did not request that the witness provide further documentation.

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found
online at the following address:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2002jun06.htm

SETTING THE FALL/WINTER AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2002

Items that were discussed and approved by the Committee:

Youth Tobacco Advisory Committee
"Wellness Network"
"Youth Society "Children's Aid"
Professor Sharon Batt - Causation and Treatment of Breast Cancer
Riverview Home - - Unique Primary Counselor Service Delivery Model
RRAP - Housing Program - Department of Community Services

Items that were submitted that need clarification prior to further discussion or matters that have been deferred to the next agenda setting meeting by the Committee:

Family SOS (An Agency that works to prevent Child Abuse)
Client Services Delivery Initiative - Department of Community Services
(awaiting clarification from Minister of Community Services)

Items that were submitted to the Committee that have not been discussed as of yet :

Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health ("A Brave New World" - Social and Economic Inclusion for building healthy public policy)

A copy of the transcript of this meeting is available from the Legislative Committees Office or it can be found
online at the following address:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2002sep26.htm

STATEMENT OF SUBMISSION

STATEMENT OF SUBMISSION

All of which is respectfully submitted to the
House of Assembly this 24th day of April, 2003

Mary Ann McGrath, MLA
Chairman

I concur

Cecil O'Donnell, MLA

I concur

Maureen MacDonald, MLA
(Vice Chair)

I concur

John Chataway, MLA

I concur

Jerry Pye, MLA

I concur

David Hendsbee, MLA

I concur

Paul MacEwan, MLA

I concur

Barry Barnet, MLA

I concur

Wayne Gaudet, MLA

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